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AT the close of the Revolutionary War, though peace had been declared, it required yet many years to settle, satisfactorily to England, Spain, France and America, just what part of this great country belonged to each, and where the boundary lines should run. The territory then known as Oregon, and covering the present States of Oregon, Washington and Idaho, was the very last to be decided, and the story of its settlement I commend to you as most fascinating reading.

But it is not that kind of history we are writing now, but a brief sketch of the missionary work among the Indians of that region, known as the Nez Percés tribe.

Far up in the central part of what is now called Washington, some of this tribe had heard from an American fur trader of the white man's God; of a better home than earth, and "of a book which told truly of the Great Spirit and of that Home, and the trail to it." For months they thought over these

things, until they had a great longing to know more about them. At last, in their high council they decided to send two old braves and two young ones to the pale faces, 3,000 miles away, to get this book, and so, in 1834, these four Indians in feathers and blankets, arrived in St. Louis, then a town of 6,000 inhabitants. We know nothing about their long journey, nor the dangers they met and safely passed, but we can imagine some of them; hostile tribes, wild beasts, storms, rocks, mountains, and it took them months to make the journey. We do not know how long they stayed, but they glided about the streets in their blankets and moccasins, looking at every new and wonderful thing, but never forgetting what they had come all that weary way to find.

And would you dream that they did not get that precious Book? No, St. Louis was a Catholic city, and the Romish Church has never read the Bible freely, as we do, and so, though they feasted them and treated them with every kindness; though they showed them their glittering churches and splendid pictures, they gave them not the Book they were seeking, and their hearts were not satisfied. The two old Indians died, and the young ones, sad, almost broken-hearted, turned back toward their far-away home. As they left, one of them made this farewell speech: "I came to you over a trail of many moons from the setting sun. You were the friend of my fathers who have all gone the long way. I came with one eye partly

opened, for more light for my people who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind, to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms, through many enemies, and strange lands, that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. The two fathers who came with us—the braves of many winters and wars—we leave asleep here by your great water and wigwam. They were tired in many moons, and their moccasins wore out. My people sent me to get the white man's Book of Heaven. You took me where you allow your women to dance, as we do not ours, and the Book was not there. You took me where they worship the Great Spirit with candles, and the Book was not there. You showed me the images of good spirits, and pictures of the good land beyond, but the Book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long, sad trail to my people of the dark land. You make my feet heavy with burdens of gifts, and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, but the Book is not among them. When I tell my poor blind people, after one more snow, in the big council, that I did not bring the Book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go on the long path to the other hunting grounds. No white man will go with them and no white man's Book, to make the way plain. I have no more words."

Sometimes what seem failures to us are not so to God, and this visit, with its sad ending, which brings the tears to our eyes as we read of it, turned out to be God's way of bringing the gospel to that western land. When the story became known in the East, christian people at once set about sending out some to teach them. The first to go were Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. H. H. Spalding, with their brides. Dr. Whitman had already made the trip by himself, and believed it was possible for men to take their families with them across the continent, and carry civilization as well as Christ, to the Indians.

Mr. and Mrs. Spalding had started for western New York as missionaries to the Indians there, but answered to this new call that they were ready. Mrs. Spalding was a delicate woman, in frail health, and all her friends, and even her husband, tried to prevent her going, but she answered in Paul's words, "What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die in the Rocky Mountains for the name of the Lord Jesus." What a wedding journey that was! Through a wilderness where were no roads; over mountains and wide and deep streams, sometimes hungry and many times weary, for five long months they traveled, tired in body but strong in the Lord. When they were at length on the Pacific Slope, though still many miles from their destination, the missionary party stopped, got down from their horses, and spreading their

blankets and raising "Old Glory" above them, they knelt around the Book, and with prayer and praise took possession of the land for Christ and the church. On September 2, 1836, they were at Walla Walla, and the long journey was over; the first white woman had crossed the continent, not for love of money, but for love of Christ and souls.

The Spaldings settled at Lapwai, on the Clearwater River, twelve miles above the present city of Lewiston. Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, established a mission near the fort. Here they labored for eleven years, teaching and preaching. In the meantime Dr. Whitman had made a visit to Washington, and through his own efforts in Congress, succeeded in saving Oregon from the English, who wanted that land for all the valuable furs it yielded.

In the fall of 1847 they were wickedly murdered by the Indians, who had been made to believe by evil-minded people that the missionaries were not their friends, that Dr. Whitman was trying to poison them when he gave them medicine, and that all their sickness was a punishment for listening to them. The angry Indians intended also to attack the station at Lapwai, but warning was given and the Spaldings escaped with all their company. Mrs. Spalding died four years later. One writer has said of her that "probably no missionary has accomplished more labor in the same period than she during her eleven years at Lapwai." She cared for her home and two children;

she taught a school of two hundred, half of the pupils being men and women, several of them chiefs. She taught the women to sew and cook, and to take care of their homes. But it was her beautiful Christian character which taught more than anything else, and these Nez Percés remained always faithful to the Americans when all other tribes were fighting and murdering them.

For twenty-four years after the dreadful death of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, the Indian wars and the influence of bad men, kept Mr. Spalding from going back to his work. In 1871 the Nez Percés mission was taken by our Presbyterian Board, and he, now an old man, began again to labor for them. From the first there was a revival, and in the three years he lived, he baptized six hundred and ninety-four persons. The men who were sent to help him did not stay long enough to learn the language nor to understand the people, but at length there came two women, sisters, who both learned the language thoroughly and also to love and sympathize with the lives of the Indians.

They were Miss Susan and Miss Kate McBeth. The former has gone to Heaven and Jesus has met her and blessed her for her work for Him. Miss Kate is still faithfully serving Him and His children in that far away, lonely land.

Susan L. McBeth was born in Scotland, near Stirling, but came to this country when very young and grew up in Ohio. Her father was a godly man,

who loved and studied the Bible, and taught it daily to his children. Susan was the eldest child and was helpful to the busy mother in many ways. At school her mates learned to look to her for protection, and nothing pleased her more than to have quarrelsome, naughty children afraid of her. One trouble of her childhood was the lack of books and too little time to read those she had; but she made good use of every opportunity and her education was an excellent one.

She loved dearly to amuse the children with stories, and of these she had a great stock. Bible stories, Arabian Nights, the Scottish Chiefs, and when these were all told she could easily make up one for the occasion. But when she rattled off her rhymes and challenged her playmates to do the same, then truly they thought her wonderful. As she grew older, she wrote down these verses, and some were published in the village paper. She also wrote articles upon various subjects and might easily have made her living in this way, but one by one she brought her talents and laid them at the Master's feet; feeling that nothing was of any account unless He could use it for His glory. She became a christian when she was about thirteen. She had a hard struggle to give up to God, but when she had done so, she said, "I am in a new world; everything is changed. The grass was never so green, nor the light so clear and bright. I am forgiven, saved." A bitter trial came not long after this, when the tender father, who alone seemed to understand the gifted girl

and who had made her his companion and friend, sickened and died. This changed all her life. Her hope of a higher education was blasted for the present, or until she could work her own way to it. Years after she said, "I see it all now. God stirred up the home nest, to make us try our wings." It was still a lovely home. The Sabbath was observed in purely Scottish style; the day closing with an exercise in the catechism, each child answering much or little according to its age—mother asking and answering with children, with her broad Scotch brogue, every question from beginning to end. When still not much more than a girl, having overcome all obstacles and obtained a fine education, she became a teacher in the university at Fairfield, Iowa. She had the prospect before her of a good income, a high place among teachers, a work she loved, and to be near her dear ones. Then came a call to leave these pleasant and comfortable quarters and to go to teach the Indians in Indian Territory. It was not an easy thing to do, and at first she thought she could not go, but after days of thought and prayer, recalling how Christ had left much more for her, and knowing that with His help she could do all things, she went. After two or three years of work among the Choctaws, during which time many came to know Christ, the war broke out, and with all the missionaries, she was obliged to flee for her life, guarded by loyal Christian Indians.

Next we find her doing a grand work among the

sick and wounded soldiers. Afterward she was for ten years city missionary in St. Louis. During this time the severest bereavement of her life came upon her, and it seemed as if the end of her toil was near, so feeble did she become. But she rallied, and in 1873, lame from paralysis, with a broken heart, she went to Idaho, to assist Mr. Spalding among the Nez Percés Indians; went, all her friends said, to die. She was no ordinary woman, this heroine of our day. She had a fine mind, finely educated. She had delicate tastes; she enjoyed good things and pleasant people, but for Christ's sake and the gospel's, she spent twenty years among rude people, only a little above savages when she came, never taking a vacation and knowing that at any moment she might be called to meet her God. Was it not heroic?

She taught in the government school at Lapwai for one year, and in her leisure moments studied the language. Then a class of young Nez Percés men were put in her care. This roused the Jesuits, who complained at Washington that the "government was supporting a theological school for the Presbyterians." "I will give up the government school," said Miss McBeth, "but I must go on with this work." So she moved to Kamiah and kept on with that particular work of training the men to be ministers, elders and missionaries to their own people. Someone has called her "a walking theological seminary." Many of her pupils are doing good work for the Master, fitted for

their manner to her. Her chair was placed for her when she entered, and when she seemed too feeble to walk alone an arm was always ready for her to lean upon. During her last days, each morning they eagerly scanned her face, to see if they could tell how much longer they might keep her. Almost to the end she taught her classes, trying to think of all the things they would need to know in the days to come.

The little church at Kamiah was repaired three or four years ago, and from being a worn out old building it was changed into a neat and attractive church, and is said to be one of the prettiest houses of worship in that part of Idaho. When the bell first rang its call to prayer, the Indians, whom we think unfeeling, wept for joy. Beside this little church, at her own request, they laid the tired body of this saintly woman, because she said she wanted to rise with them at the resurrection. She died at her home in Mt. Idaho, and her sister, in a letter to a friend, wrote as follows of the burial:

"Sue passed over to her reward the morning of the 26th of May. Her suffering was so great, I would not, I could not, wish to keep her one day longer. I was with her for three weeks before she died. According to her wish, we buried her just back of the little Kamiah church she loved so well. Two white women and the two drivers went with me down to Kamiah; we reached the ferry at sunset, Saturday evening, and were met there by a company of sorrowing Nez Percés.

We crossed over the river and found another company awaiting us at her old home. We at once placed her body on the platform of the pulpit: there it remained all through the tender touching service of the Sabbath, for she had taught them not to bury on Sabbath. To the right of the pulpit sat her pupils with bowed heads, and tears running down their dark faces, the younger ones sorrowing most. Sobs were often heard when the oft-repeated expression fell on their ears that Sabbath: "The mother is gone; we are orphans now." Robert Williams tried hard to turn their loss to a blessing, by urging all to follow her teachings, praying for her same spirit of devotion to the Master. There were no cold services there that day, and, to the whites with me it was most touching. Although it was raining hard, and the hour for her interment early, 7 o'clock, Monday morning, the little church was again full for the funeral services. How proud the Kamiah people are to have her resting there. How sacred and beautiful the spot is. Kamiah is dearer to me than ever. The little church is so cosy and beautiful. In her will she provided for a good, substantial monument and an iron railing to be put around her grave. Her own house is willed to Robert Williams in remembrance of his faithful work as her helper among the people; her personal property and household goods all are to be divided equally among her pupils. Although she has little valuable furniture, there is much to divide. Her dictionary and grammar are to go to Smithsonian In-

stitute. What a loss to these poor Kamiahs, with no one to care whether they are sick or well, warm or cold. Your pictures of the Kamiah church are precious. I can see just the spot where her worn-out body rests. How sweetly her scholars tell of her saying to them, she wanted to have them around her upon the morning of the resurrection.

KATE MCBETH."

As a people we have not been very kind to the Indians; as a *Christian* nation we have not followed the Golden Rule in our dealings with them. The best we can do for the few that are left, is to give them the gospel which has made us better than they; for we must not forget that our forefathers were savages, too, and it is this grand Book which has made us what we are to-day. Shall we not pray, as we read the story of this lovely life, so free from selfishness and so thoughtful and loving to others, that God will show us what work He has for us to do and make us willing to go anywhere and do anything for Him. And let us add a prayer for the dear sister, doing her work so faithfully now at Lapwai, asking the dear Lord to stay always beside her, to comfort her when she is lonely and give her strength when she is weak, and to bring her pupils all to Himself. And may be at the judgment day He will say, Here is a soul you helped with prayer, and how surprised and glad we shall be.